

Public Notice – Environmental Project

PURPOSE OF NOTICE:

The Department of Environmental Quality seeks public comment on the state's response to the environmental aspects of a proposed project in Accomack and Northampton Counties, Virginia.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

September 8, 2009 to October 1, 2009

TYPE OF RESPONSE:

Federal Consistency Determination

DEQ is reviewing a proposed federal construction activity to determine if it is consistent with the Virginia Coastal Resources Management Program (VCP) established pursuant to the U.S. Coastal Zone Management Act. The VCP seeks to protect the quality of air, water or other natural resources in Virginia's coastal area.

NAME OF AGENCY PROPOSING THE PROJECT:

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The National Aeronautics and space Administration (NASA) Goddard Space Flight Center's Wallops Flight Facility (WFF) is supporting the implementation of state-of-the-art technology and network architecture on the Eastern Shore of Virginia through a cooperative agreement with the Eastern Shore of Virginia Broadband Authority (ESVBA). The purpose of the partnership is to provide a universal assess, fiber optic network delivering an advanced broadband network to rural communities, businesses, school systems, and various organizations on the Eastern Shore of Virginia to foster economic development. Phases I and II of the project have been completed. Phase III, the subject of this review, consists of the construction of two primary segments: Segment I ("Middle Mile"), involves connecting the backbone to WFF, Accomack Industrial Park, Onancock Community Network, Cox communications, and other service providers; and Segment II ("Education Segment"), includes the construction of distribution spurs to the Accomack and Northampton County school systems. All Phase III construction on NASA property would be within existing conduit. Work outside NASA property would employ a "plow" system, which cuts a small slit in the ground and feeds the fiber optic cable and conduit underground to a minimum depth of 42 inches and would occur within existing Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) easements and right-of-ways. Road and utility crossings would employ directional boring techniques. Approximately, 43 miles of fiber optic cable would be installed. NASA finds the proposal consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the enforceable policies of the Virginia Coastal Resources Management Program (VCP) (also called the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program).

HOW TO COMMENT:

DEQ accepts comments from the public by e-mail, fax or postal mail. All comments must include the name, address and telephone number of the person commenting and be received by DEQ within the comment period. The public may review the project documents at DEQ's central office in Richmond.

CONTACT FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS, DOCUMENT REQUESTS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

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